

Tale of a Skunk in Lehi

By Edna K. Brewster

My Father, Robert Blair Karren, tells this humorous incidents in his life at Lehi, Utah. My sister Lida Karren Carey, and I had been sent out to the field to pick hops. We had a trap set in the fields and went there on the way to see if we had caught anything. Sure enough, there was a skunk. It was down in the hole as far as the chain would let it go. We got a forked stick and twisted it in the skunk's tail. Lida pulled on the stick, while I stood ready with a club to hit it. As it came to the top, a smarting spray of skunk perfume caught us full in the face. In spite of smarting eyes, I managed to kill the animal. Some of the neighbor's children were with us and told us that a skunk pelt was valuable and we could get money for it. So regardless of the odor, we skinned it.

It was thick with fat and someone said that skunk oil was worth \$10.00 a quart. we forgot all about our original errand and filled our sacks with the skunk fat and pelt and went home. We built a roaring fire, put the fat in a huge dripper and placed it in the oven. While the oil was being rendered, we took the pelt to the store.

They smelled us coming and put us out of the store and wouldn't accept the pelt. We threw it under the store steps and for days afterwards, people went into the store choking and holding their noses. By this time the fat had permeated the neighborhood and Mother had gotten wind of it.

I was just taking the oil from the oven when Mother came home. She took one look and-smack. She cuffed me on the side of the head an I dropped the dripper and \$10.00 worth of oil spilled onto the floor. It was a wooden floor and the oil ran into the cracks and crevices. Mother had to scrape it up and then scrub a good long time before it was clean. The oil we salvaged, Mother used to administer to friends and neighbors afflicted with rheumatism. It was very good for that.